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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
17 September 1963

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Developments in Southeast Asian Countries
On the Counterinsurgency Critical List

1. South Vietnam

Popular discontent with the Diem regime remains high. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The government outwardly remains in firm control of the situation.

There has been a step-up in Viet Cong attacks in the Delta region south of Saigon, but in other areas activity has been limited to small-scale operations. To date, the government's military capabilities appear to remain essentially unaffected by the internal political situation.

2. Laos

The three factions have maintained the uneasy status quo in Vientiane following last week's brief outbreak of violence and Souvanna's subsequent departure on an extended trip abroad. Phoumi Vongvichit, a ranking Pathet Lao figure who had journeyed to Vientiane in late August in an unsuccessful attempt to win concessions from Souvanna, has returned to Khang Khay.

Military activity remains minimal. However,

[REDACTED] suggest that the Pathet Lao may be prepared to resume military pressure against neutralist and rightwing forces in the near future. They still are handicapped by their inability to reopen Route 7, their key supply artery to the Plaine des Jarres from North Vietnam.

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